



Station Area Advisory Committees

VISION PLAN

Canton



INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the first phase of the Station Area Advisory Committees (SAAC). The SAAC process is part of the Red Line's public involvement program.

What role did the SAACs fulfill?

SAACs are advisory to the MTA. Each SAAC was extremely helpful and provided input about their community and how the proposed station location would "behave" in their community. The SAACs functioned as a focus group. The SAACs have three major responsibilities:

- Vision Planning
- Station Design and Goals
- Sharing Information

This document summarizes the SAAC's activities regarding Vision Planning and Station Location. The Vision Plans for each SAAC summarize the first half of the SAAC efforts. The second half of the effort will focus on Station Design and Goals. The meetings for this effort started in October of 2010 and concluded in early spring of 2011. The documentation of the Station Design and Goals efforts will be an addendum to the Vision Plans.



Light Rail Rendering

During the Vision Planning process, each SAAC decided on their station area's boundaries; examined the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for their areas; and reviewed the connectivity elements for the proposed station locations. The SAACs not only examined what existed, but also thought about the potential for their areas. They also reviewed the station locations in relation to the Vision Plan for their station area. In some of the SAAC areas, it was confirmed that the station location was in keeping with the community goals and in other instances station locations were modified. Each Vision Plan explains the elements of the Visioning Process and the Station Location.

Once the SAACs completed their Vision Plan and confirmed their desired Station Location, Open Houses were held for the general public. These Open Houses were extensively advertised and over 400 citizens attended. There were four Open House sessions; each one focused on a different portion of the Red Line corridor. The areas were West – Baltimore County, Route 40 West, Downtown and the Eastside. At these Open Houses, the draft Vision Plans were discussed with the community and feedback was obtained. After this public feedback, the SAAC members revisited their Vision Plans to ensure, "Did we get it right?" The Vision Plans are the result of this effort.



STATION AREA VISION PLAN

Station Area Defined (analysis):

What do we see? What do we know? What is our Vision Area?

Analysis

a) Physical Boundaries

The Canton Station Vision Area is located in the southeast portion of Baltimore City, bordering the Harbor. The Canton SAAC defined the borders of the Vision Area to be Eastern Avenue and Patterson Park to the north, the Harbor to the south, South East Avenue to the east and Duncan Street to the west (*Figure 1*). The northern and southern boundaries were chosen because they are prominent physical features, the Harbor and Patterson Park. SAAC members felt that these provided natural boundaries, which define the planning area. The western boundary was chosen because SAAC members perceived it as the border between Canton and Fells Point, and the eastern boundary was chosen because the SAAC agreed that everything beyond was considered within the Highlandtown or Canton Crossing station area.



The Can Company

b) Existing Conditions/Context

Intermodalism

The primary vehicular routes in the area are Boston Street and Eastern Avenue, which run east-west, and Linwood Avenue, which runs north-south connecting Boston Street and Eastern Avenue. Boston Street carries a high volume of car and truck traffic, which travel at relatively high speeds.

There is no transit rail service to this area; however, several bus lines run through the area. Bus lines 11 and 13 run along Boston Street and serve the borders of the Vision Area; line 13 also runs north-south along South East Avenue. Bus line 7 runs east-west along Fait Avenue and serves the middle of the Vision Area. Bus line 10 runs east-west on Eastern Avenue on the northern border of the Vision Area (*Figure 2*). Each route has several bus stops in the neighborhood, and a few stops have bus shelters. SAAC members indicated that buses in the area do not run frequently, making it difficult to access the area by transit and resulting in low bus ridership. However, many residents do use the 7 line.

There is a Water Taxi stop located at the Korean War Memorial Park directly south of Potomac Street. The Water Taxi provides a transportation alternative around the Inner Harbor.

Bicycles are accommodated with on-street facilities along Fait Avenue and a portion of Boston Street. The bike lane on Boston Street is on the north side, and runs from Aliceanna Street extending to Montford Avenue. There is bike access allowed on the waterfront promenade, but only during certain hours (*Figure 3*). SAAC members agree that bicycle transit is not adequately accommodated in the Vision Area.

Land Use

The majority of the Vision Area consists of single-family townhouse residents. There are two concentrations of retail. There are several cultural and institutional activities, including two public schools, churches, the Canton Public Library and the Du Burns Arena recreational facility.

One of the concentrations of retail is around O'Donnell Square. This is a small urban commercial area with many restaurants and a few retail establishments wrapping the Square. The other concentration of retail is the former industrial American Can site, on the north side of Boston Street between South Montford and South Linwood Streets, which has been renovated for retail and office space. A relatively new Safeway is located directly to the east of the Can site.



O'Donnell Square

Along the south side of Boston Street, from Aliceanna to South East Avenue, are a number of former industrial sites that have either been redeveloped or the renovated. New construction includes a number of townhouse projects and the Anchorage high-rise residential. The Ship Yard, Tindoco and Canton Cove are all former industrial buildings renovated for residential reuse. Light House Point is a mixed-use retail, office and residential project. Several of these projects include marinas (*Figure 4*).

This area includes significant open spaces including: the Korean War Memorial Park/Canton Waterfront Park (including a boat launch), St. Casimir's Park on Boston Street, O'Donnell Square Park, the Canton Fishing Pier, and Bonvegna Fields. In addition to these open spaces, the Inner Harbor promenade extends from the Canton Park to downtown, and around the Inner Harbor to Harbor View (*Figure 5*). This is a hardscaped promenade that allows for a continuous walking path around the Northwest Branch of the Patapsco River (Inner Harbor). The promenade is about 80% complete.

The current zoning of the Vision Area includes single-family and multi-family Residential Districts, Business Districts and Planned Unit Developments. Transform Baltimore, the city's comprehensive rezoning is currently reviewing zoning for this area. It is not anticipated that significant changes will be made in this area.

Economic Development

The Vision Area is primarily residential and attracts visitors to the waterfront and several retail/restaurant areas; however, it is not a major employment center. There are several established retail and service employers located in O'Donnell Square and along Boston Street. Additionally, there are some commercial offices on the waterfront and at the American Can Company on Boston Street. Although the Vision Area is mostly developed and stable, there is some opportunity to develop new commercial office and retail activity along Boston Street, which would provide employment opportunities (*Figure 6*).



Safety and Security

The SAAC members generally consider the Vision Area to be a safe and secure area for residents and visitors. Some areas where pedestrians don't feel secure are areas that do not necessarily have "eyes on the street." For example, the areas behind the Can Company on Hudson Street, and behind Safeway on Lakewood Avenue, are less active than other streets and have inadequate lighting. Dillon Street east of Safeway to Potomac Street is also dark and feels less secure to pedestrians.

Pedestrian safety in the area is also affected by automobiles and traffic. Boston Street is perceived as difficult to cross because of high volumes of traffic, speed of traffic, short pedestrian signal times, and insufficient number of crossing locations.



Safeway

Connectivity

Most residents and visitors access the Vision Area by automobile, which puts street parking in high demand. Most residents do not have off-street parking and there are no public parking lots or structures. Primary access points for residents and visitors in vehicles are Boston Street and Fleet Street from the west, Linwood Avenue from the north, and Boston Street and O'Donnell Street from the east. Eventually, local vehicles distribute among the neighborhood streets to their destinations.

There are also many people that pass through the area in automobiles as they come and go from downtown Baltimore. These vehicles have the same east and west access points, but do not distribute through neighborhood streets, many of which have four-way stops and slower speeds. Most of these vehicles remain on Boston Street as they travel through the Vision Area. It is hoped that many of these commuters would park at Canton Crossing and ride the Red Line.

Cyclists accessing the Vision Area can arrive from several points, including those mentioned above, as well as the promenade to the south, and Eastern Avenue and Patterson Park to the north. For cyclists, on-street facilities are limited and do not reflect desired paths, one of which is Boston Street.

Pedestrians access the Vision Area from many points, and distribute throughout the neighborhood's urban grid to residences, commercial destinations, and the waterfront (*Figure 7*). While the portion of the Vision Area north of Boston Street is generally considered walkable, SAAC members expressed dissatisfaction with the walkability of Boston Street itself. For example, the area around the Can Company and Safeway on Boston Street is a destination for residents and visitors, but it is automobile oriented and difficult to access as a pedestrian. Similarly, access to the waterfront is compromised by Boston Street's high traffic volume and infrequent pedestrian crossings.

Neighborhood Identity

The Canton neighborhood is a desirable location for residents and visitors because it offers many walkable streets, parks, restaurants and retail establishments, as well as proximity to marinas and the waterfront. Preservation and reinforcement of these elements are significant to SAAC members and their Vision Plan. To reinforce the walkability of Canton, the SAAC members desire to have some streets improved with better lighting, increased landscaping and repaired sidewalks. Boston Street, in particular, should be improved by calming and reducing traffic, increasing pedestrian crossings, increasing landscaping and street trees, and introducing active street frontages where possible (*Figures 8*).

It is also important to preserve and reinforce the existing parks along the waterfront and Boston Street. These parks lack definition and are underutilized, compared to O'Donnell Square Park which is surrounded by retail properties and is very active. The Canton station and new development near the station could help bring more activity to these parks. SAAC members also suggested introducing small neighborhood pocket parks that would create a connected network of open space from the waterfront to Patterson Park. Although the Vision Area extends to the waterfront, Boston Street acts as a barrier between Canton and the waterfront. The desire is to improve access to the waterfront by providing more, and safer, pedestrian crossings along Boston Street, as well as calming and reducing traffic on the street (*Figure 9*). Existing retail properties at O'Donnell Square are stable and should be preserved, but the properties along Boston Street need reinforcement. These areas need better pedestrian access and more street frontage.



Canton waterfront

In addition to reinforcing existing neighborhood qualities, SAAC members also desire the introduction of new elements to enrich the area's identity. One suggestion was to encourage new development that brings cultural and family-oriented establishments to the area. Currently, the area lacks diversity in age and family-size, and introducing this type of activity would encourage families with children and teens to choose Canton as their home.

Another element of the SAAC Vision Plan is to make the area more bike-friendly by introducing a network of appropriate and safe bike lanes and facilities throughout the neighborhood. Many members felt that a primary on-street bike route should be planned for Boston Street, which is a desirable path for cyclists and offers access to residential, retail and employment destinations. Others felt, however, that traffic along Boston Street was too dangerous and other routes for cyclists should be established.

c) Stabilization Area vs. Redevelopment Area

The Vision Area is primarily stable with established housing stock, and retail and office properties that are occupied and well-maintained. However, the retail properties along Boston Street west of Montford Avenue have a high turnover and are often unoccupied. There have been many bars and restaurants that have failed here, and SAAC members suggested introducing a different type of development to stabilize the area. Specifically, SAAC members agree that Canton does not need more bars and restaurants, but rather they would like to see more cultural institutions or family-oriented establishments. Suggestions included a large bookstore and a community center.



Station Area Vision: What changes? What stays the same? What do we value?

Values

SAAC members value the pedestrian quality of their neighborhood, access to the waterfront and open space. The non-automobile connectivity should be bolstered, improved where necessary and reinforced. They also value the successful mix of stable residences, retail, and office properties. However, retail and office areas along Boston Street should be improved to be more pedestrian and bike friendly and not automobile-oriented. Any new development should provide active street frontages, be integrated with the existing neighborhood, and should be an improvement to the area (*Figure 10*).

Based on these values, the SAAC thinks the conditions of Boston Street should be rethought. The SAAC members felt that the street should be reconfigured to have one travel lane in each direction, more crossings, as much full time street parking as possible, and a separated bike lane or cycle track. These changes would reduce the number of cars on Boston Street, slow traffic, increase accessibility for pedestrians and bikes, and increase connectivity to the waterfront. The SAAC felt that if Boston Street retains two travel lanes in each direction, there will be no improvement in traffic calming or parking and there will not be room for a bike lane. Overall, SAAC members want to see Boston Street as a comfortable and safe neighborhood street and not a barrier that disconnects the neighborhood. The one and two-lane options for Boston Street should be discussed further with the wider community.



Canton dog park



Canton rowhouses

a) Strengths

Canton's Vision Area strengths include neighborhood stability with a mix of land uses and location. The area has a large stock of well-established and well-maintained residential, retail and office properties. There are also several public open spaces and parks. Canton's location on the Harbor waterfront makes the area a popular destination for visitors and a desirable location for residents and businesses. Other strengths include the walkability of Canton as a result of its urban street grid and the existing entertainment and restaurant destinations, like those at O'Donnell Square Park.

b) Weaknesses

Weaknesses in the Vision Area include Boston Street, in its existing condition, and a lack of transit options. Boston Street has a heavy traffic volume, is a truck route and is bordered by several vehicle oriented retail areas instead of active street frontages. For these reasons, Boston Street disconnects Canton from much of the waterfront and is difficult to cross as a pedestrian. Because Canton lacks transit options, most residents and visitors drive to the area. This creates another weakness of the Vision Area, which is overloaded on-street parking.

c) Opportunities

The Vision Area has many opportunities to improve the pedestrian quality of the neighborhood and create more multi-modal connections. By reconfiguring the traffic lanes of Boston Street, and improving the pedestrian zone along the street, Canton can become more walkable and better connected to the waterfront. Active street frontages, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and improved streetscaping can enhance Boston Street for all users. Reconfiguring Boston Street also presents the opportunity to incorporate bicycle transit and create better bicycle connections throughout Canton. A new transit station in Canton is an opportunity to create a “front door” to the Vision Area and to provide connections for all modes.



The Shipyard retail and offices

d) Threats

The quality of Canton’s Vision Area is threatened by the existing volume of vehicular traffic on Boston Street and vehicle-oriented development. If Boston Street remains in its existing condition, the opportunity to create a pedestrian and bicycle friendly area around the station will be compromised. Also, any reduction in on-street parking in Canton will compromise the Vision Plan.

Goals : What are our Vision Area Goals? What do we want to see for the future?

Guiding Principles

Multi-modality

- Incorporate bike facilities, including bike lanes and bike parking, at each Red Line station.
- Transfers between buses and light rail should be easy and convenient.

Access and Connectivity

- The Red Line should open connections to the waterfront and provide more pedestrian crossings.

Design

- The station design should reflect the Canton neighborhood and enhance the community.
- The transit way should improve the look of the neighborhood and Boston Street.
- Design of the transit vehicles should be updated and modern.

Development

- The station should be close to existing commercial development.
- Encourage future commercial development in areas adjacent to the station.



Sustainability

- The Red Line should improve the environment by reducing air and noise pollution.

Public Space

- Design and develop the station area so that public space is active and lively.

Safety

- Traffic lane configuration and street treatment should be used to calm traffic, increase pedestrian and bicycle safety, and increase pedestrian crossings.

Implementation

- MTA should actively maintain frequent communication with the community about the Red Line and its progress.

Vision Statement

By describing the existing conditions of the Vision Area and by establishing areas for improvement, the Canton SAAC identified core values to guide their planning process. These values became tools the SAAC used to determine how to create better connections for a stabilization area and to integrate a walk-up transit station. Specifically, the SAAC vision for Canton is a unified pedestrian and transit oriented neighborhood that attracts a diverse range of residents and visitors to active retail areas, parks, and the waterfront, and is connected by safe, comfortable and attractive paths for all modes. Transit facilities should be integrated into the neighborhood, and the station should be located near active retail areas with easy and direct access to these destinations (*Figure 11*).



St. Casimir's Church

STATION CONCEPT

Station Location

Platform Location/Alignment

The SAAC determined that the Canton Station should be located in the median of Boston Street south of Safeway, between the Safeway entrance driveway and the intersection of Boston Street and Lakewood Avenue (*Figure 12*).

The SAAC preferred configuration of Boston Street, associated with this station location, is one travel lane in each direction with full time parking lanes where possible and a continuous bike lane. This station location and associated street configuration satisfy the SAAC Vision Plan goals and guiding principles, and include many positive impacts on the Vision Area.

The station location is close to the active retail area at Safeway and the American Can Company, and will provide direct access to this desirable destination as well as the waterfront. However, because this area is currently vehicle-oriented, pedestrian access and walkability in the immediate area will need to be improved to ensure that the station is integrated and functions well. There should also be a pedestrian connection made from the station to Hudson Street to provide a direct path to the residential neighborhood beyond the Safeway and Can Company. This location also provides a new intersection at the Safeway entrance, which will improve the connection across Boston Street and provide safe access to the station. Reconfiguring Boston Street will also have positive impacts on the Vision Area, including a reduction in cars and vehicle speed, a new bike lane on Boston Street, increased street parking and more opportunities for landscaping. All of this will improve the pedestrian quality of Boston Street, allow for more and safer connections across Boston Street, and create a walkable neighborhood street.



St. Casimir Park

Platform Type

The Canton Station will have a center platform. The station platform will be located in the median of Boston Street, and will provide access to trains moving in both directions. Pedestrians will access the platform from a signaled intersection, where they will follow a crosswalk to the center of the street. At the center of the street, a low ramp will take users up to the platform level.

Station Performance & Station Image – Neighborhood Identity

This document summarizes the Vision Plan and Station Location efforts of the SAAC. This concludes the first phase of the SAAC efforts.

The second phase of the efforts begins in October 2011 and is anticipated to run through early Spring 2012. During this second phase, the SAACs will focus on Station Performance and Station Image. The discussions will include elements such as:

- **Urban Design and Site Planning:** This will cover the functional relationship of the station to the neighborhood. The SAAC will review station orientation, accessibility, landscape/hardscape opportunities, and vision and physical connectivity (pedestrian, bicycle and auto – intermodal).
- **Station Programming:** This will include discussions on system-wide standard elements and elements that may become “customized” per neighborhood station.
- **Station Image-Neighborhood Identity:** The SAAC will discuss special features, art in transit and recommend station names.

The outcome of the second phase of SAAC efforts will be documented as an addendum to the Vision Plan.

Fig. 1



LEGEND

 SAAC-Defined Planning Area

PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY

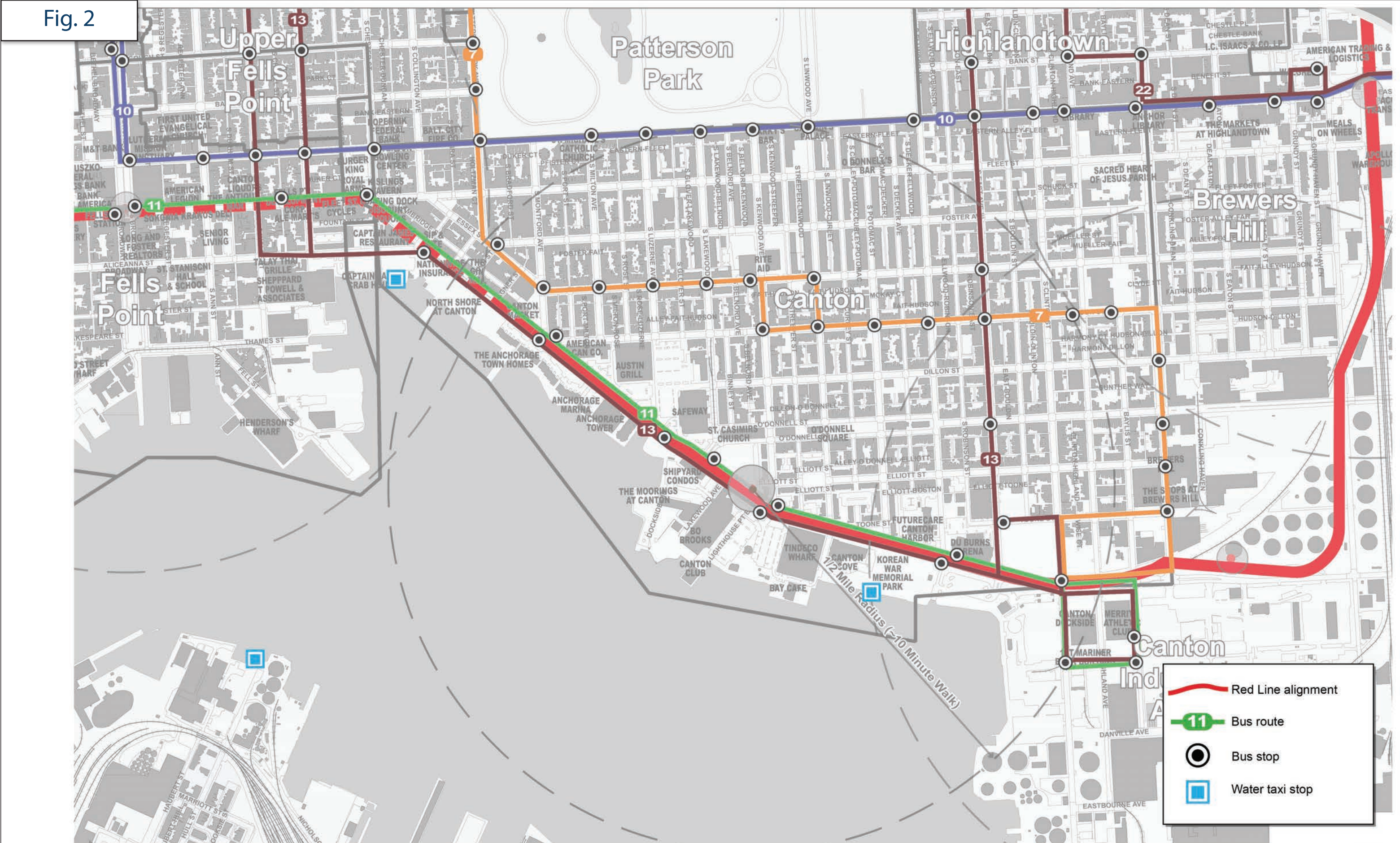


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April 14, 2011



Fig. 2



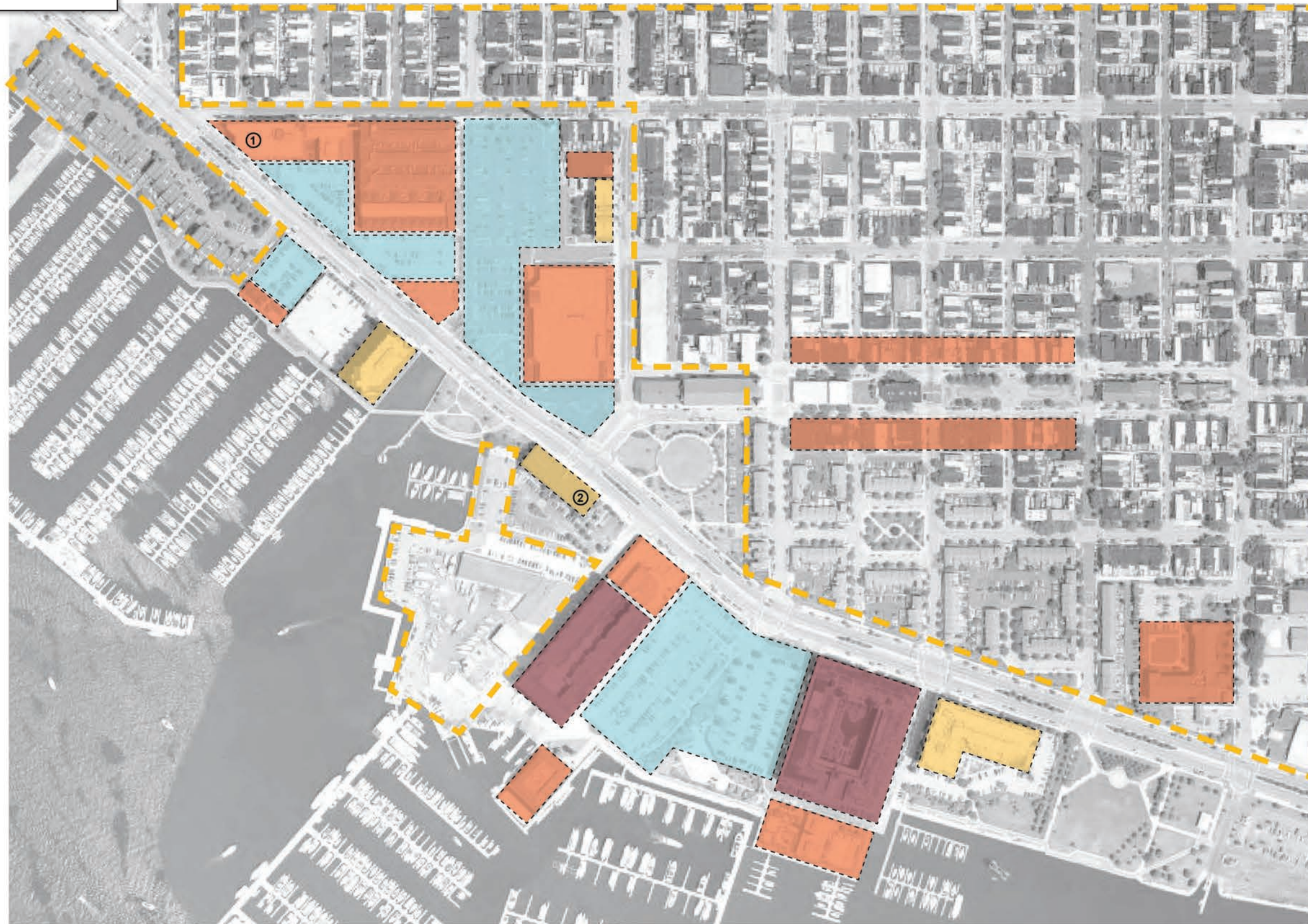
CANTON STATION - EXISTING TRANSIT

Fig. 3

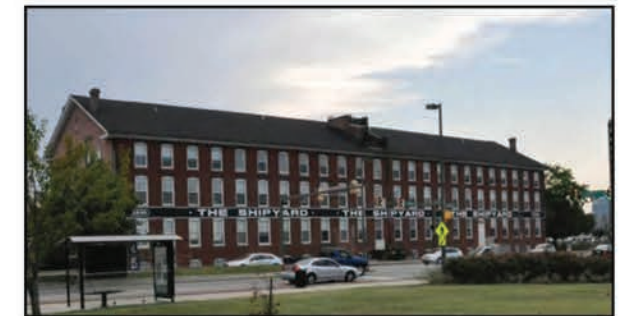


CANTON STATION - EXISTING BIKE ROUTES

Fig. 4



① The Can Company commercial building



② The Shipyard at Lighthouse Point condo building

LEGEND

	Commercial, retail, office, and healthcare
	Commercial parking
	Higher density residential
	Lower density residential, single-family rowhouse/townhouse is typical
	Mixed use, ground level commercial or retail with high density residential above

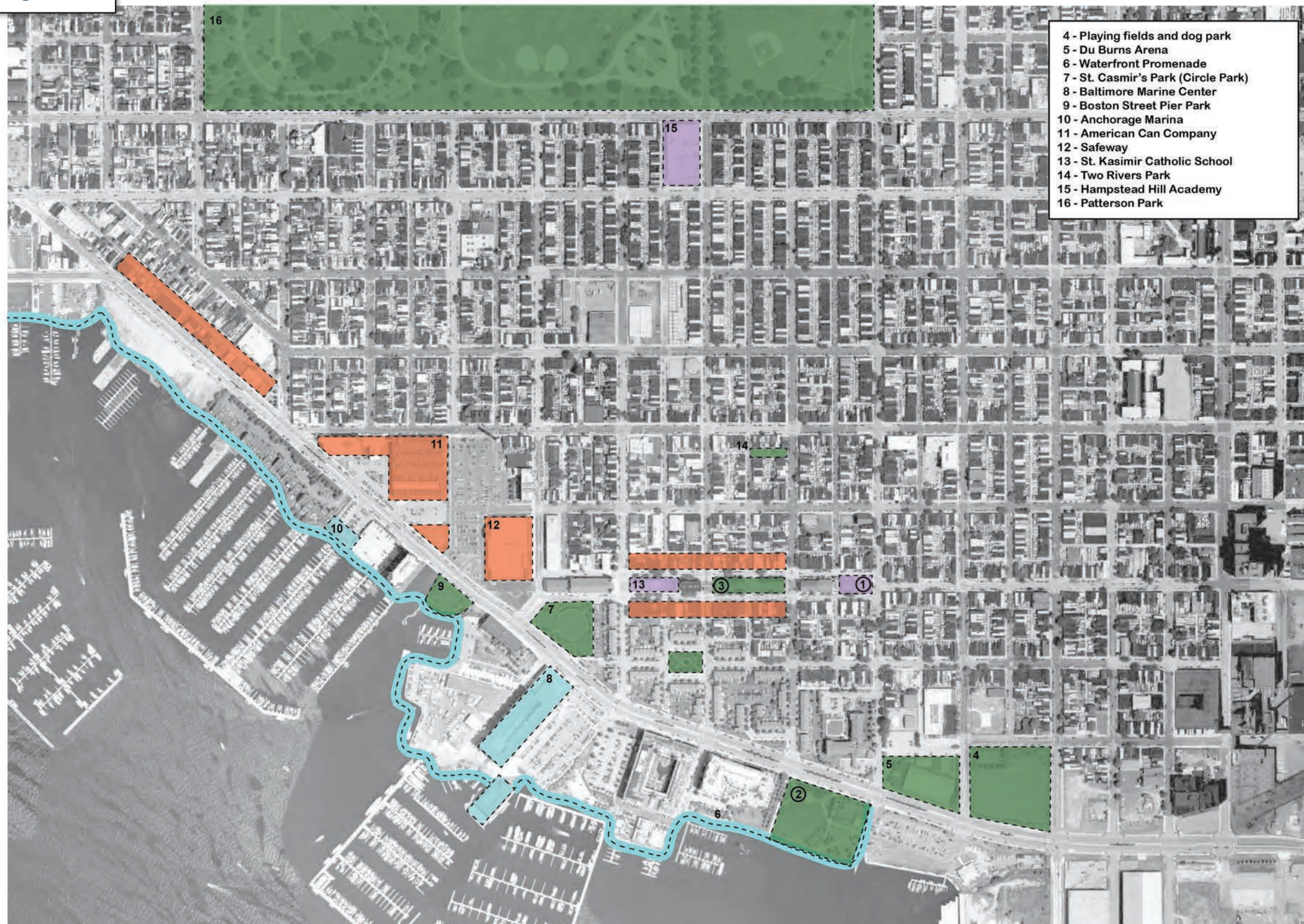
EXISTING LAND USE

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Fig. 5



① Canton Public Library



② Canton Waterfront Park



③ View northeast to O'Donnell Square

LEGEND

	Primary commercial activity and employers
	Marinas and waterfront destinations
	Public parks and recreation
	Educational and cultural facilities

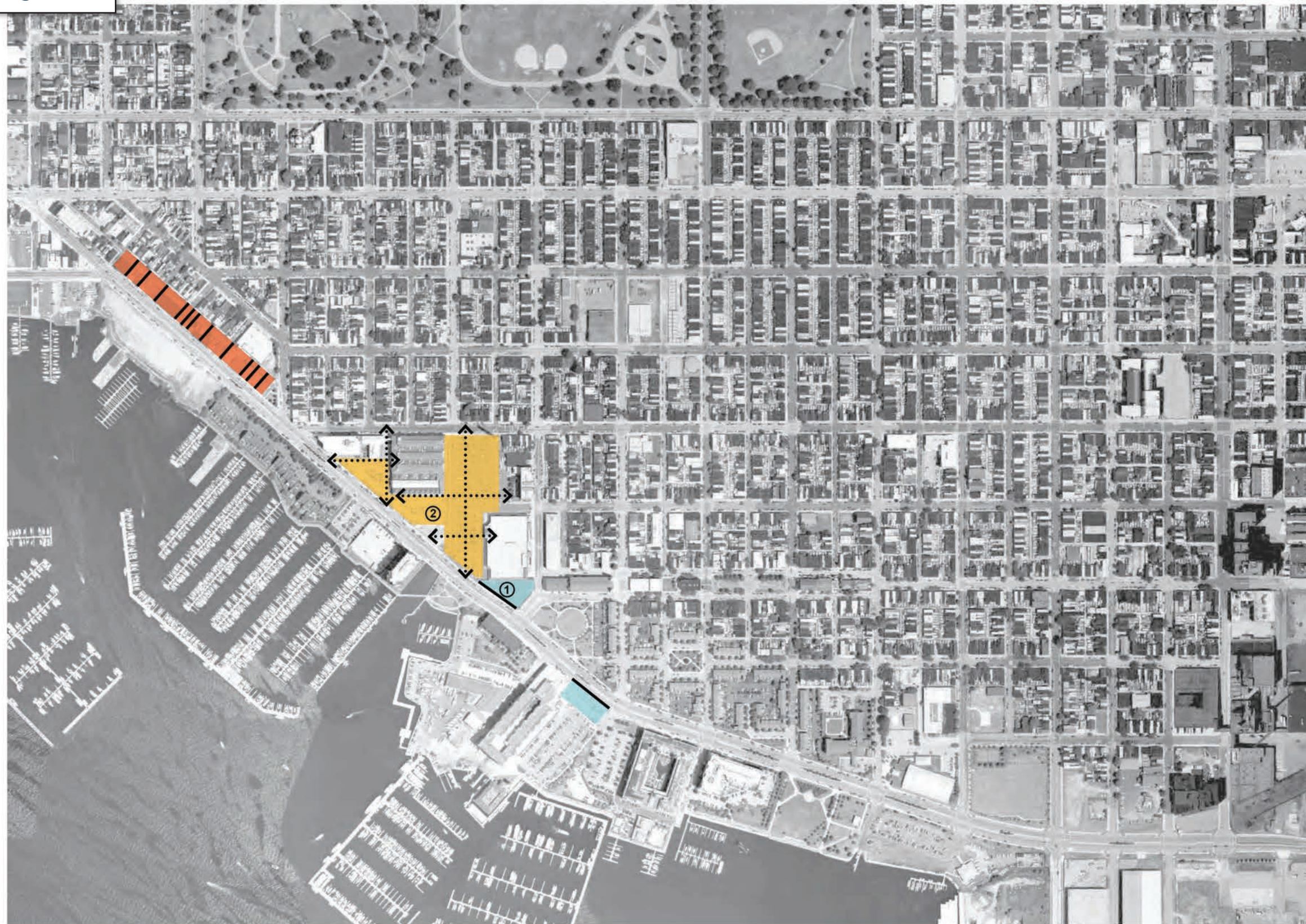
ASSETS AND DESTINATIONS

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Fig. 6




① View west toward Safeway parking



② View north into Can Company parking lot

LEGEND

-  Use TOD infill at parking lots of Can Company and Safeway to connect commercial activities, Boston Street and transit
-  Develop commercial frontages to define Boston Street and provide interest close to the station
-  There is high turnover of restaurants here; redevelopment and diversity of use is desired to provide more activities for families and children

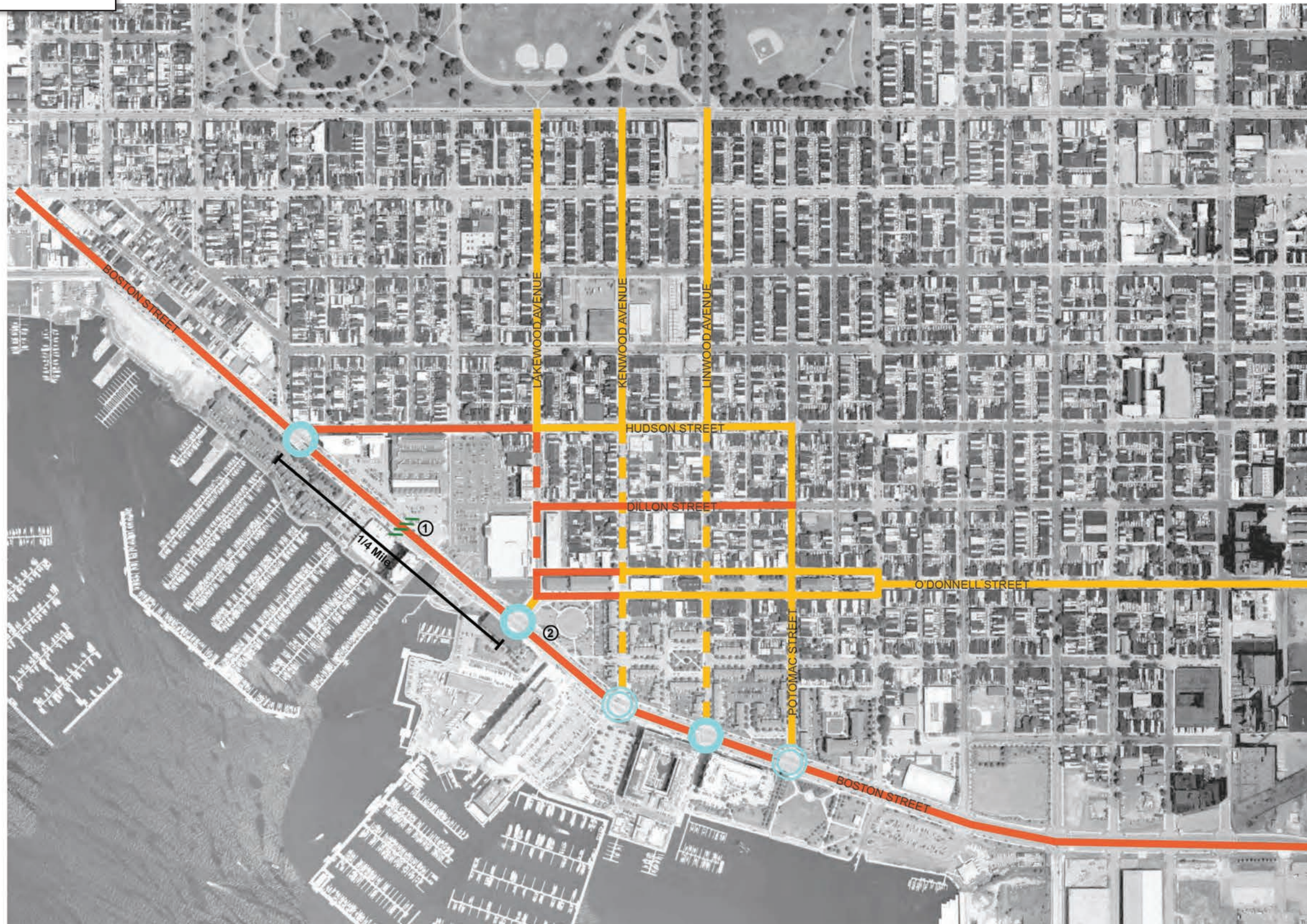
DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

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Fig. 7



EXISTING PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

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① Unofficial pedestrian crossing at Anchorage Marina



② View east on Boston Street

LEGEND

- More pedestrian friendly streets
- Less pedestrian friendly streets
- Damaged or missing sidewalks
- Signaled pedestrian crossings on Boston St.
- Unsignaled pedestrian crossings on Boston St.
- Heavily used & unmarked pedestrian crossing

Fig. 8



SAAC PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE IMPROVEMENTS

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① Unofficial pedestrian crossing at Anchorage Marina

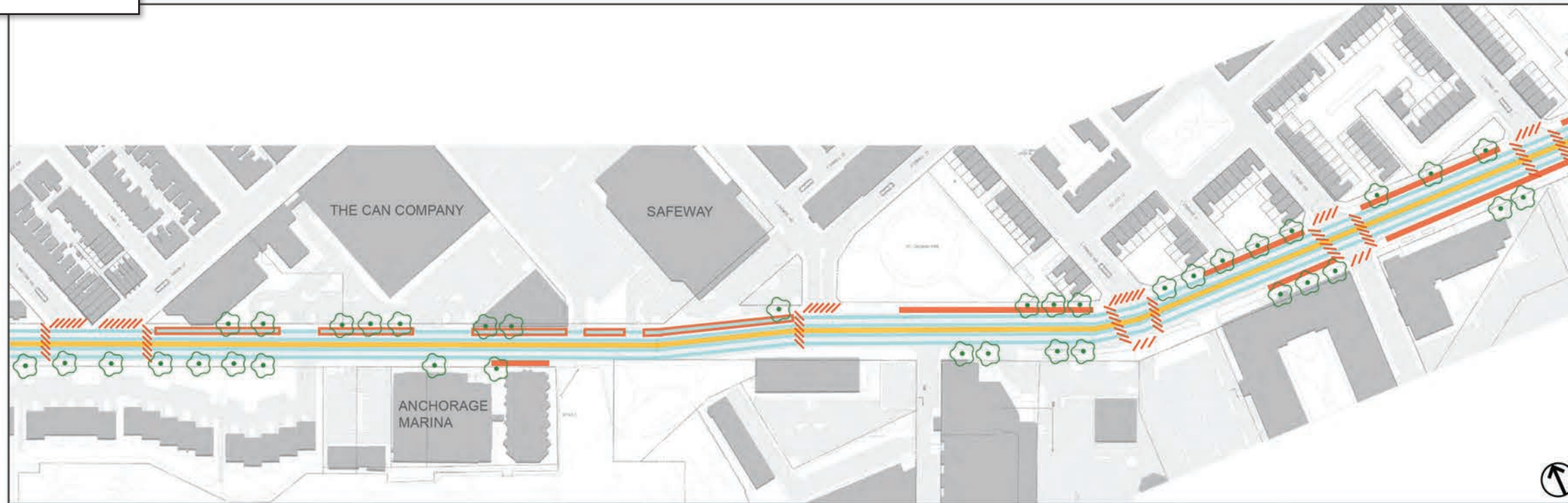


② View east on Boston Street

LEGEND

- Improved Bicycle Route
- Improved Pedestrian Environment
- New Signalized Pedestrian Crossing
- Improved Bicycle Parking Facilities

Fig. 9

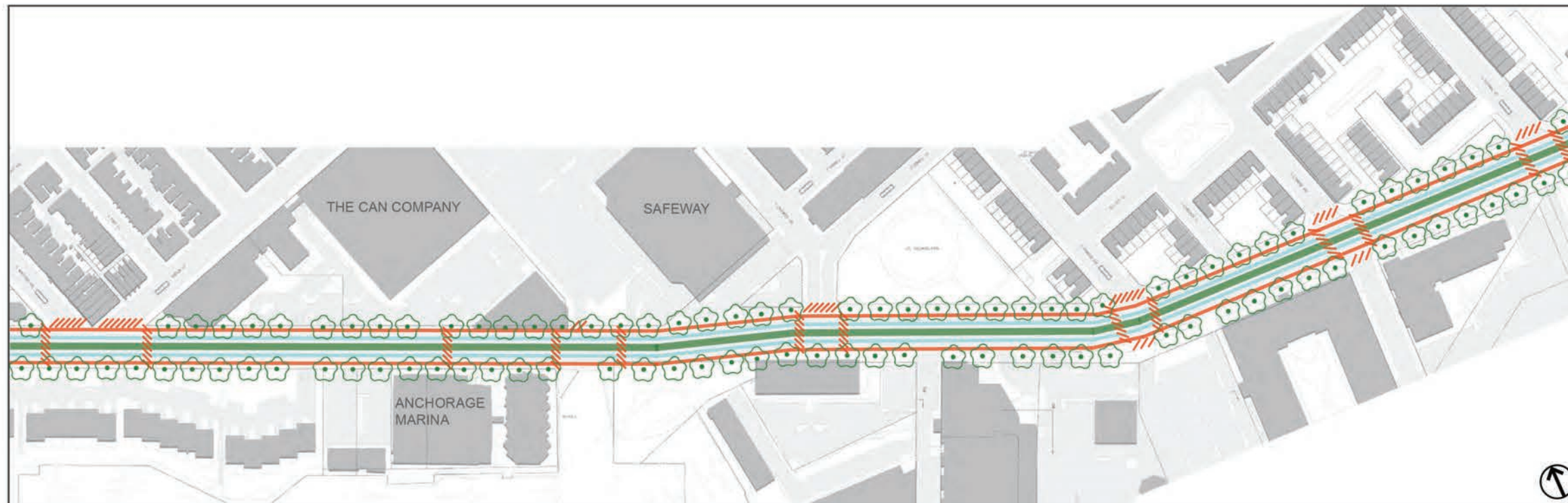


EXISTING CONDITIONS

As it exists, Boston Street acts as a barrier that separates Canton from the activity on the waterfront. Lack of pedestrian crossings, heavy traffic at high speeds and unfriendly sidewalks contribute to this disconnection.

LEGEND

- Thru lane
- Shared median and left turn lane
- Full-time street parking
- Off-peak street parking
- Pedestrian crosswalk
- Street tree



OPPORTUNITIES AND GOALS

The vision plan goals intend to improve the connectivity across Boston Street and to unify the Canton neighborhood with the residences, businesses and recreation activities on the waterfront.

LEGEND

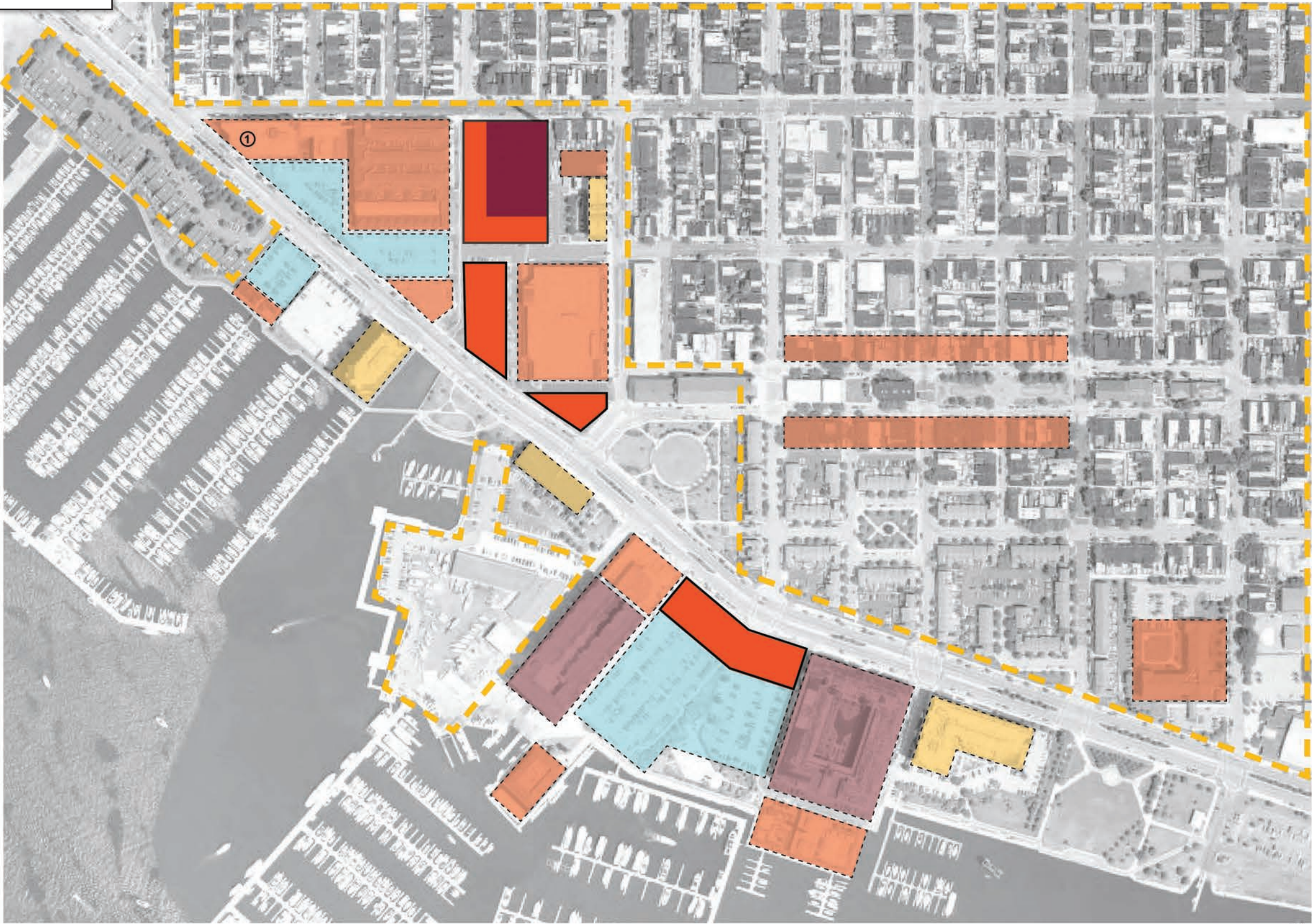
- Reduce thru lanes to calm and reduce traffic
- Incorporate landscaping into median tracks
- Increase full-time street parking or provide dedicated cycle track
- Provide safe pedestrian crosswalks at appropriate places and connect to waterfront
- Increase tree canopy on Boston Street

BOSTON STREET

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Fig. 10



① The Can Company commercial building

LEGEND

- Mixed-use, transit oriented development
- New commercial, retail and office frontages create a more active street life
- Existing commercial, retail, office, and healthcare
- Existing surface parking
- Existing high density residential
- Lower density residential, single-family rowhouse/townhouse is typical
- Existing mixed use, ground level commercial or retail with high density residential above

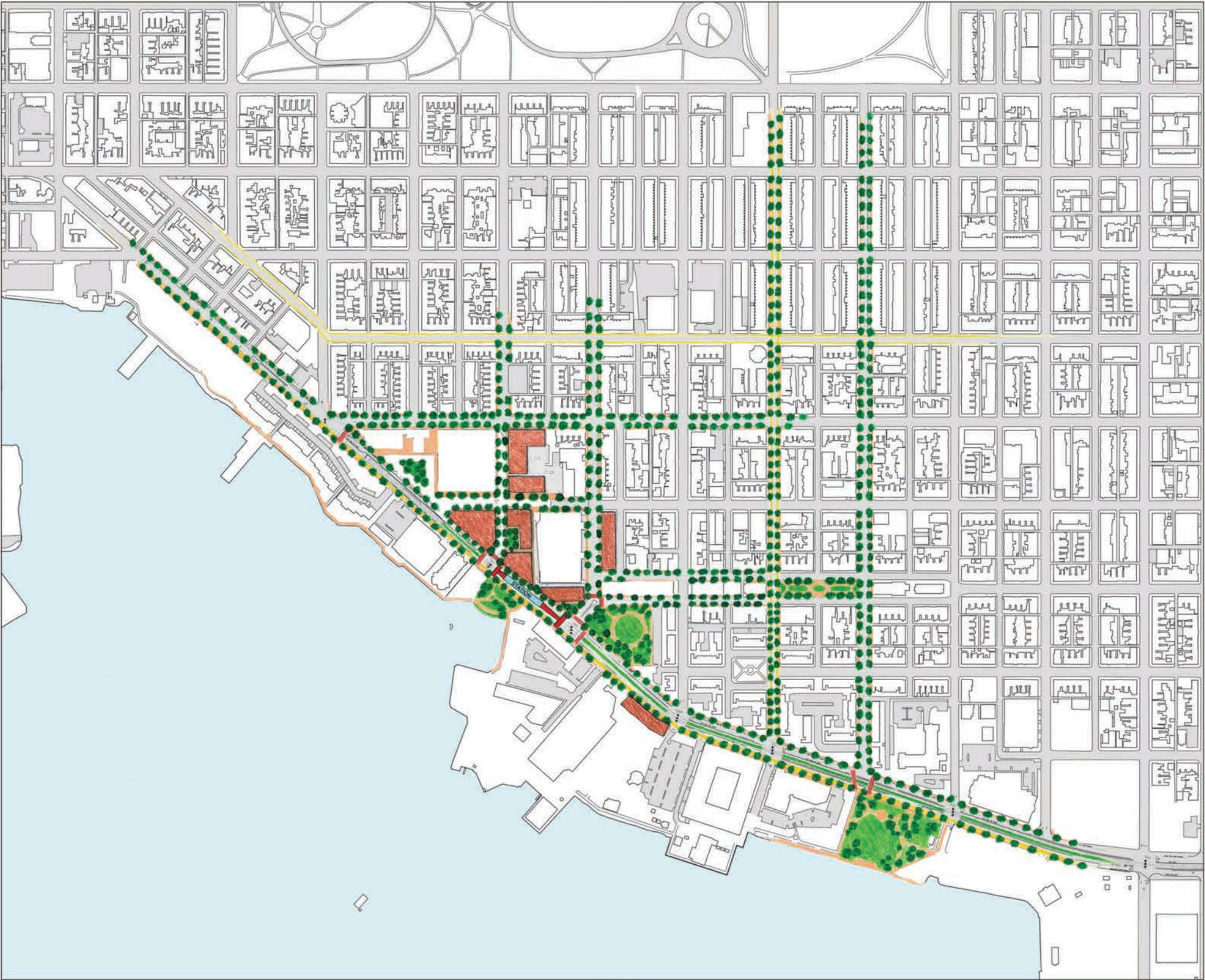
SAAC PROPOSED LAND USE

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Fig. 11



VISION PLAN FOR AN ENHANCED AND CONNECTED CANTON

WHAT IS OUR VISION?

STATION #16 - CANTON STATION

Fig. 12



CANTON STATION LOCATION

FIGURE 12